

## REMARKS

The Examiner has objected to claim 2 under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c) as failing to further limit the subject matter of the previous claim. Applicants have amended claim 2 to further limit this apparatus claim with a structural limitation. Support for the new limitation can be found on page 7, first full paragraph of the application, as filed.

Claims 1-2, 9-13, and 21-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (US Pat. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (US Pat. App. No 2003/0045646).

Applicants point out that the Buono et al. application and the current application were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person. Applicants note that the publication date of the Buono et al. application is March 6, 2003, and the filing date of the present application is August 21, 2003. According to MPEP § 706.02, only when the publication or issue date of the reference is more than 1 year prior to the effective filing date of the application (MPEP § 706.02) does the reference qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(b). Furthermore, the Buono et al. application does not qualify as prior art under §§ 35 U.S.C. 102 (a), (c), or (d). The Buono et al. application would have to be applied under one of §§ 35 U.S.C. 102 (e), (f), or (g). Because the Buono et al. application is only available as a reference under these sections and is the subject of a common assignment, § 35 U.S.C. 103(c) disqualifies it as a proper reference. Without benefit of the Buono et al. application, the references cited in the current rejection fail to teach a specialized coating, and are therefore deficient.

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the coating or layer of Buono et al. application is designed to increase friction or holding strength between the sleeve and the roller. As such, one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that the Buono et al. application is teaching the use of an adhesive coating on the inside of the sleeve. The problem for which the Applicants are seeking a solution is not slippage of the printing blanket, but rather the delamination of the blanket due to the wicking of solvents and other chemicals that come in contact with the blanket, and claim 1 incorporates this limitation. It is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. Applicants have amended claims 1 and 13 to exclude the adhesive coatings of the Buono et al. application and the like, making clear that the coating of the current invention is to prevent corrosion and delamination. Support for the new limitation can be found on page 6, lines 11 through 20 of the application as filed. There the Applicants make clear that an adhesive applied between the metal printing blanket and the drum will tend to bubble and delaminate upon exposure to solvents and other chemicals that are routinely utilized. As such, the specialized coating cannot be an adhesive layer as disclosed by Buono et al. Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

Claims 3, 5, and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646) and in further view of Rosvold (U.S. Pat. No. 3,705,072).

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. application to disclose the limitation of the "specialized layer." Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. application cannot

preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a “specialized layer” limitation. Furthermore, as submitted above, it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. In light of amended claim 1, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. The Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646), and in further view of Berna et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,347,927).

Berna et al. teaches the use of a polyurethane epoxy “used on the inner surface of the spirally-integrated reinforced compressible tubular structure, or upon the inner surface of a carrier tube, for mounting around a cylinder, may comprise a pressure-sensitive adhesive to insure easy assembly and removal.” This adhesive is applied in order to ensure that the blanket will not slip from its engagement with the metal cylinder during operation. This has nothing to do with the present invention, where a non-adhesive specialized layer is applied to the back of the blanket in order to prevent corrosion and delamination. Amended claim 1 now recites a blanket with “a specialized non-adhesive coating”, thereby further distinguishing this feature.

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. application to disclose the limitation of the “specialized layer.” Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. application cannot preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a

“specialized layer” limitation. Furthermore, as submitted above, it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. In light of amended claim 1, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. The Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

The Examiner has rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646), and Rosvold (U.S. Pat. No. 3,705,072), and in further view of Brookfield (U.S. Pat. No. 5,941,172).

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. application to disclose the limitation of the “specialized layer.” Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. application cannot preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a “specialized layer” limitation. Furthermore, as submitted above, it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. In light of amended claim 1, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. The Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646) as applied above, and in further view of Buono et al. (US 2003/0116044).

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. application to disclose the limitation of the “specialized layer.” Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. application cannot preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a “specialized layer” limitation. As submitted above, it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. In light of amended claim 13, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. Furthermore, the Applicant points out that the Buono et al. ‘044 application is also subject to a common assignment, and is precluded from being cited against the Applicant under 35 U.S.C. 103(c). Applicants submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

The Examiner has also rejected claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646) as applied above, and in further view of Risquez et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/129896).

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. application to disclose the limitation of the “specialized layer.” Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. application cannot preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a “specialized layer” limitation. Furthermore, as submitted above, it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. In light of amended claim 13, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. The Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

Claim 15 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646) and Risquez et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/129896) as applied above, in further view of Rosvold (U.S. Pat. No. 3,705,072).

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. application to disclose the limitation of the “specialized layer.” Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. application cannot preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a “specialized layer” limitation. Furthermore, as submitted above, it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. In light of amended claim 13, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. The Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

The Examiner has rejected claim 16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646) and Risquez et al. (U.S. Pat App. No. 2003/129896) as applied above, in further view of Berna et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,347,927).

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. application to disclose the limitation of the “specialized layer.” Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. application cannot preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a “specialized layer” limitation. Furthermore, as submitted above it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing

delamination and corrosion. In light of amended claim 13, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. The Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

The Examiner has rejected claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646) and Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0116044) as applied above, and in further view of Rosvold (U.S. Pat. No. 3,705,072).

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. '646 application to disclose the limitation of the "specialized layer." Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. '646 application cannot preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a "specialized layer" limitation. As submitted above, it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. '646 application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. In light of amended claim 13, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. Furthermore, the Applicant points out that the Buono et al. '044 application is also subject to a common assignment, and is precluded from being cited against the Applicant under 35 U.S.C. 103(c). Applicants submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

The Examiner has rejected claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646) as applied above, in further view of Jenkins et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,793,041).

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. application to disclose the limitation of the “specialized layer.” Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. application cannot preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a “specialized layer” limitation. Furthermore, as submitted above, it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. In light of the amended claim 13, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

The Examiner has rejected claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castelli et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,749,298) in view of Buono et al. (U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0045646) and Jenkins et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,793,041) as applied above, and in further view of Rosvold (U.S. Pat. No. 3,705,072).

As applied above, the Examiner has relied upon the Buono et al. application to disclose the limitation of the “specialized layer.” Since the commonly assigned Buono et al. application cannot preclude patentability under 35 U.S.C. 103(c), this rejection is also deficient with respect to a “specialized layer” limitation. Furthermore, as submitted above, it is not clear that the adhesive coating of the Buono et al. application would be useful in the claimed context of preventing delamination and corrosion. In light of amended claim 13, it is clear that the Buono et al. application does not teach a nonadhesive coating. Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome and request its withdrawal.

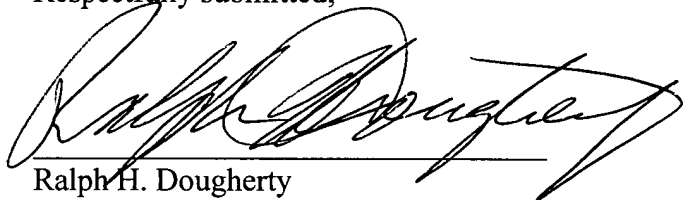


Claims 8, 18 and 20 have been indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, in light of the amendments to independent claims 1 and 13, and the comments presented herewith, all claims now appear to be allowable, Claims 8, 18, and 20 have not been amended.

Since the amendments to the claims do not add more claims than previously paid for, no additional fee is required.

In view of the foregoing Amendment and these Remarks, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such favorable action is respectfully requested on behalf of Applicants.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph H. Dougherty", written over a horizontal line.

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